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Argentina: Progress Against Terrorists

The junta is making inroads against Argentina's terrorist movement, according to evidence reportedly drawn from documents seized in recent raids against the insurgents.

the documents indicate Montonero leaders will order many of their followers to go into hiding rather than face an anticipated all-out government offensive in the urban areas where they operate. The Montoneros are said to believe they cannot withstand such an offensive, but do not intend to cease their operations entirely.

documents of the People's Revolutionary Army reveal dwindling numbers and finances. The group acknowledges that some 240 of its members have been killed by government forces, 800 are in prison, and contact has been lost with 350 others. The group's treasury, once estimated in the millions of dollars, now has only about $100,000.

the junta has arrested a ranking federal police official recently exposed as a member of the People's Revolutionary Army. He has reportedly admitted to being active since 1970, . The arrested official allegedly has provided the names of some 30 of his colleagues who also help the extremists.

The junta, badly in need of a success against the insurgents, will probably trumpet these signs of progress in an effort to mollify its right-wing military critics. It is still too early, however, for the junta to be greatly encouraged. Terrorist attacks continue, despite signs that the insurgent groups are retrenching. Moreover, the arrest of the police official is further evidence that terrorist informants are numerous and well-placed.

The People's Revolutionary Army claimed credit for the killing last week of four Uruguayans, including two former congressmen who had been living in exile in Buenos Aires. It is not clear, however, whether the terrorist group was actually involved in the murders or whether the killings were the result of an operation by a right-wing death squad.

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